

Amazement and surprize stopped Selima; a sudden tremor shook her whole frame; and before she could recover herself, a thin mist arising from the river, condensed into a cloud and covered her entirely from the view of her companion. A pleasing slumber stole upon her senses, and when she awoke, she found herself upon the highest peak of mount Taurus: she had scarce time for recollection, when one of those benevolent genii, who preside over the good and virtuous, thus addressed her.

I have saved thee, O Selima, if not from ruin, yet at least from the extremest danger: the importunities of Zara would at length have prevailed; and wine, music, and the softest tales of love, would justly have contributed to thy undoing. Those objects which affect the senses strike more strongly, and numbers rest there without looking farther, or considering the great end of their existence. To convince you of this truth, close thine eyes for a moment, then look beneath the mountain, and tell me what thou seest.

I see, said Selima, a vast expanse of water, and one small island in the middle of it: a river divides it into two parts, equally productive of the conveniences of life, and traced out into numberless paths, which at length unite in one common road on each side
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of the river. This spot seems to be inhabited by the same species of beings, but their employments and pursuits are extremely different: those on the left hand are either perpetually toiling to amass little heaps of earth, and gather together the various productions of the soil, in much greater quantities than they can possibly make use of, or, impatient of labour, consume in riot and excess that necessary portion which is allotted them for their support. They travel, indeed, through different paths, but their tendency is the same: and I see them successively plunging into that illimitable track of waters with looks full of anxiety and solicitude, or with an air of the greatest gaiety and unconcern.

To the right is exhibited a very different scene; a pleasing cheerfulness dwells upon every face, except a few, whose melancholy cast and disposition of mind throws a gloom on all which they behold. These chuse out the most difficult paths; they look with horror on every innocent amusement, and partake even of the necessaries of life with fearfulness and trembling, and, like weary travellers, they are continually wishing for an end of it. Their happier companions, who travel with great alacrity along the borders of the river, taste its refreshing stream, and gather with a frugal, but unsparing hand, whatever the luxuriant soil affords them. A firm
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